

58 c4.01.4 Spy Face

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# FILMS

## Italian director makes unbalanced, offensive film all about the CIA

By Peter Dragadze

TAORMINA, July 26 -- For ten days at the Taormina Film Festival the woes of the world have been presented in movies from 22 countries. To mention only a few of the problems examined by the pictures, Brazil described the fate of the exploited Indians, Greece the trials and tribulations of World War II German occupation and the subsequent later years of dictatorship, Denmark and West Germany the disadvantages of being a woman, and France the advantage of being a woman and not a man. Sweden's main worry seemed to be over-sexed school teachers, while Italy in half a dozen movies hammered the Church, the middle-class, Fiat, the state and the Christian Democrats amid a flurry and a flutter of red banners, clenched fists, and mass demonstrations.

On Thursday night the main culprit was the United States and in particular the CIA, blamed in no uncertain terms for almost every social-political-sexual upheaval that has hit the globe for the past two decades or so.

The film, called "Spy Face," an Italian production directed by Giuseppe Ferrara, contained probably more anti-American propaganda than this writer has seen on any screen in any place at any time. To use the director's own words to describe the theme of his opus, "In this moment, on five continents, the greatest espionage organization, the CIA and connected organisms, are weaving one of the tightest networks with investigations, instructions, tortures, news, radio interceptions, photography, assassinations, intrigues, that the human mind can imagine.

"The film endeavors to present, in the most stark way how and why this enormous apparatus functions and has functioned in the past. The most important episodes of the CIA's history are constructed faithfully on the basis of documents, published or still unedited, in such a way as to give the spectator the sensation that he is watching an aggregate of 007 spy films and, at the same time, a real documentary.

### EPISODES INTERLACE

"The many episodes interlace, bringing into bas relief the secret techniques, the plots, and the politics steeped in duplicity carried out by secret agents. These are mounted at a sharp and rapid rhythm, often drenched in blood, atrocities, and savageness, and they bear at all times the seal of that gigantic apparatus, whose cynicism succeeds in becoming almost scientific. But the inspiration for all this must be sought in the merciless action of the great families of finance and the administrative advisors of multi-national companies employ in the defense of their power. For the price of a ticket the spectator will gain the key to understanding some of the greatest 'mysteries' of life in the world today."

The episodes the director refers to -- and for which the CIA, the oil companies, United Fruit Company and ITT are mostly blamed -- include the invasion of Cuba and the Bay of Pigs episode in 1961, the death of President John Kennedy and his brother Bob Kennedy, the death of Che Guevara in Bolivia, the death of Allende in Chile, and the formation of neofascist groups in Italy and elsewhere in Europe.

All this in a framework of bad acting, non-scripts, and a wax-work horror museum of mostly sensation-seeking sexual torture.

With news-reel clips, Ferrara had added little sketches with laughably made-up actors and actresses impersonating the protagonists in the incidents used in the film.

In all, it is an unbalanced, offensive movie.

I suggest to spectators "that for the price of a ticket" they go and see "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" -- also screened in Taormina -- instead. Social problems are also present, and a couple of birds are far more convincing than most of the artists that appeared in "Spy Face."